

Passover on the Farm

The Earth is Waking up: Signs of Spring and Exploration of the Seder Plate

Time to complete activities: **1 hour**

Age range for activities: **0-5 + parents/guardians**

Number of Participants: 15-40 families

Location: Milk and Honey Farm, Boulder, CO.

Number of Staff/Volunteers: 6-8

Program Overview & Guiding Questions / Enduring Understanding(s)

This program was designed for families with young children to connect with each other, their community, and the earth through multi-sensory activities centered around Passover and the coming of spring.

Passover is the celebration of the Jews exodus from Egypt as a free people. It always coincides with spring--here in Colorado: when the earth is waking up, when the blossoms and trees are budding, when the birds and light return. With the advent of spring, we begin to feel a sense of hope and renewal, and spending time outdoors throughout all these changes can help us feel more connected, mindful and grateful for the beauty around us. It reminds us to take responsibility for ourselves, our community, the world, and to give thanks for what we have and for what is coming.

Guiding Questions:

- What are some signs of spring?
- What is Passover? Why do we celebrate it?

Overall Goals/ Outcomes:

- 1) Participants can identify signs of spring and can connect spring to Passover
- 2) Participants get their hands dirty, have fun and take chances
- 3) Participants explore and connect to the farm/nature and leave with one highlight/nugget/rose
- 4) Parents incorporate local/organic food to their seder plate (anticipated)
- 5) Parents connect with other parents (anticipated)
- 6) Parents connect with their children (anticipated)
- 7) Parents will return with their families to explore the farm (anticipated)

Materials needed:

Overall: volunteers to run activities, printed activity guides, name tags, pens, bell, guitar, animals: goats, chickens, worm bin

Per activity:

Seed balls: dry clay, soil/compost, wildflower seeds, 2 sensory tables, a few tubs, water, paper bags, markers, seed ball info, pollinator info+ pictures

Matzo flour: matzah flatbread and chevre, fresh picked herbs, plates, knives, grain grinder(s), wheat berries, bowls, paper bags, 1 long table, laminated pictures of wheat-flour process

Scavenger hunt: pail with scavenger hunt cards, laminated signs for all herbs (Hebrew and English brahas), "touch me", "smell me", "taste me" signs, 2 example seder plates with pre-harvested items harvest knife

Worm bin: worm bin, composting worm information with pictures

Story time: blankets, books related to Passover & farming

Chickens: signs regarding kindness to animals & safe egg handling, nest box & general info (*more eggs with return of light*), buckets of veggies + meal worms for feeding

Goats: Buckets of hay/veggies, signs for care for animals/safe feeding, spring birthing information

Session Plan:

Timeline:

Week before (*varying time*): purchase supplies, materials, send program curriculum to volunteers ahead of time

Day before (*1 hour*) : Stage tables and activity materials at farm, post all signs

Day of:

10:00-10:30: Meet volunteers at farm: review responsibilities, complete set up+ signage, prep seed balls

10:30-10:40: Meet at farm, self-explore+music, official welcome circle & intro (safety, bathrooms, activity location)

10:40-11:25: Rotate through activities. With 5-10 minutes at each station, families can participate in all the activities, however they may prefer to choose between 2-3.

11:25-11:30: Closing circle, thank you and song

11:30-12:00: Clean up

Parent-led activities: (*with volunteer floaters to hold chicken, monitor worm bin, help with scavenger hunt, etc*)

- **Spring walk scavenger hunt:** parents will lead their children on a sensory awareness scavenger hunt, looking for signs of spring and exploring different parts of the Passover seder plate. There will be scavenger hunt cards provided and signs, and volunteers posted throughout greenhouse, educational beds and farm to guide their experience.
 - Signs to post around farm:
 - *Before Eating Earth-Grown Produce (Vegetables)* Baruch Atah Adonai, Eloheinu Melech ha'olam, Borei p'ri ha'adamah.
 - Blessed are You, Adonai, Our God, whose Presence fills creation, Creator of the fruit of the earth.
 - *When Smelling Fragrant Shrubs and Trees or their Flowers:* Baruch Atah Adonai, Eloheinu Melech ha'olam, Borei atzei v'samim.
 - Blessed are You, Adonai, Our God, whose Presence fills creation, who creates fragrant trees.
 - *When Smelling Fragrant Herbs, Grasses or Flowers:* Baruch Atah Adonai, Eloheinu Melech ha'olam, Borei isvei v'samim.
 - Blessed are You, Adonai, Our God, whose Presence fills creation, who creates fragrant herbs
- **Storytime:** parents who are/with low-energy children can select stories to read on blankets picnic style. Stories should be farm/spring/Passover themed.
- **Worm/Goat/Chicken love:** children can feed & pet goats and chickens, hold eggs, gently play with worms, etc. Buckets of food will be provided ahead of time.
 - Veggies and hay will be available for feeding.

- Sign to post at each animal pen:
- *When Seeing Unique-Looking People or Animals* : Baruch Atah Adonai, Eloheinu Melech ha'olam, m'shaneh ha'bri-ot.
 - Blessed are You, Adonai, Our God, whose Presence fills creation, who makes creatures different.

Assisted activities (led by educators/volunteers):

Seed Ball: Intro

(Background for instructor): Passover always happens in spring, when the earth is waking up (snow melting, trees budding, flowers blooming, birds returning, worms rising, babies being born). Nature is experiencing a rebirth- it is free from winter, enjoys more light and warmth, just like the Jewish people experienced freedom from their dark years as slaves in Egypt. We celebrate Passover to remember what our ancestors went through so we can fully enjoy and fully experience the joys of freedom, just like we are better able to feel gratitude for spring after a long, cold winter.

At this station, we are going to celebrate the warming days, the return of the light and the coming of spring by making seed balls to attract pollinators like bees, butterflies&moths, hummingbirds, and wasps/flyes/beetles. Seed balls will provide food and a home to the pollinators as they help make our spring gardens grow!

Initial guiding questions:

Do you like butterflies? Do you like bees? Lots of people are afraid of bees, but they and all the other pollinators (show picture of pollinators) are very important for helping us produce food to eat! Has anyone eaten parsley on the Seder plate? In order to have new parsley seeds to plant each year, butterflies and bees need to visit different parsley flowers and mix their pollen together first!

Making a seed ball:

What is a seed ball?

Seed balls are fun, easy ways to plant flowers in a way that does not disturb the earth (ie with a plow or tractor). Even better, the seed balls contain almost everything the seed needs to grow, and requires zero care after being “planted”!

What do seeds need to grow?

Soil, air, sun, water. Your seed ball will contain soil (to nourish plant), clay (to hold seed ball together and weigh it down), and a few seeds (too many, and the seedlings compete for resources and space). Once formed, the balls will be tossed into a field (and/or brought home) and the sun and rain will help the seeds grow about 4-6 weeks after “planting”

Why are wildflowers important?

Wildflowers are hearty, strong flowers that provide food and shelter for pollinators. Our seeds are native to Colorado, so once grown, they will attract butterflies, bees and other pollinator insects to the area. We need pollinators to mix the pollen of many of our fruit and vegetable crops so that we can have food to eat.

Recipe: mix 3-4 parts clay powder, 3-5 parts soil/compost, 1 part seed

- Add enough water until desired consistency is reached-easily rolled into ball without breaking apart. Add more clay/compost as needed.
- Talk to seed ball. Whisper love and good wishes for seeds to grow into flowers.
- Take your ball and toss into field, or find a special spot and snuggle your ball down (careful not to squish) Have extras, or want to try at home? Place balls in paper bag. Let dry for 24 hours toss!

Sign to post:

On seeing the small-scale wonders of nature, such as beautiful trees, animals, and people: *Baruch atah Adonai, Eloheinu melech haolam, shekacha lo beolamo.*

We praise You, Eternal God, Sovereign of the universe, that such as these are in Your world.

Objectives:

<i>Kids can identify a pollinator</i>	<i>Kids get their hands dirty & have fun</i>
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(More) Guiding questions to further engage during activity:

<i>What are some signs of spring?</i>	<i>Can you see any signs of spring from where you stand? (birds, bugs, flowers, green leaves, etc)</i>	<i>Has anyone ever planted something before?</i>	<i>How do you feel when you see a flower?</i>
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Milling wheat

At this station, kids will grind wheat berries to make flour, in honor of the matzo (unleavened bread) eaten during Passover. After flour has been milled, invite families to help themselves to some matzo (gluten and gluten free) and blend their own herbs into chevre for a spread.

Steps:

1. place handful of wheat berries into grain grinder
2. Place bowl under grinder
3. Turn crank until flour comes out
4. Add more berries as needed
5. Put flour into bag for later use
6. Eat matzo with spread as snack!
 - i. Bracha for eating bread!

Objectives:

<i>Kids will understand wheat plants make flour</i>	<i>Kids will understand flour makes matzo</i>
<i>Kids will have understanding of simple tool (mill) function</i>	<i>Kids will have fun, work muscles</i>

Guiding questions:

What is bread made from? What is wheat (a plant! Point out wheat growing nearby, if germinated)? Where does flour come from (grinding wheat berries!)? What is matzo? How is matzo different than bread in my sandwich (unleavened bread vs bread that has risen). Why do we eat matzo at Passover? What happens when you turn the crank?

Fun Fact:

Black Winter Emmer, grown at Milk and Honey farm, is “beloved as delicious ‘farro’ in Italy and used in the original matzah in ancient Egypt, and known as ‘Em ha Hitah or Mother Wheat’ in ancient Israel, since all modern wheat evolves from ancient wild emmer”

Sign to post:

- You are not to eat any chametz with it; for seven days you are to eat with it **matzo**, the bread of affliction; for you came out of the land of Egypt in haste. Thus you will remember the day you left the land of Egypt as long as you live.

— Deuteronomy 16:3

Student Reflection:

Music is a natural way to gather participants to the opening and closing circle. The opening circle is a good time to build excitement and anticipation for the upcoming activities, as well as to celebrate coming together on a beautiful day in a beautiful place to celebrate warmth, freedom, renewal, community. The closing circle is a wonderful time as a group to reflect on highlights and takeaways, as well as upcoming farm events.

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